

December 14, 2009

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Rep. Michael A. Arcuri (NY-24) announced today that he secured \$100,000 in funding for SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY-ESF) to develop a software-based carbon accounting and modeling tool to calculate the ability of NYS forests to absorb and hold carbon dioxide from the air, which helps combat climate change. Knowing how much carbon the forests hold can be used to calculate the fair market value for land owners interested in selling carbon credits to businesses, creating new investment opportunities in rural areas.

U.S. Rep. Michael Arcuri said: "Providing funding for this vital research at SUNY-ESF is critical to our environmental future in Upstate New York. This funding will utilize our homegrown natural resources to reduce harmful greenhouse gasses in our atmosphere to sustain our local ecosystem and our future generations. It also has the potential to assist local landowners in marketing carbon offsets to interested businesses, bringing new investment that would bolster the local economy of forest communities."

Dr. Cornelius B. Murphy, President of SUNY-ESF, said: "I applaud this important first step, sponsored by Congressmen Arcuri and Tonko, to help New York State calculate and define the carbon sequestration of our sustainable forests and farmland."

The model developed by this research will measure the ability of trees to hold carbon-dioxide, a key factor in any emissions reduction strategy. It will enable more accurate forest management decisions related to wood harvesting and assist forest managers nationwide in their efforts to maximize the sequestration of carbon in a national greenhouse gas emission reduction strategy.

Additionally, the research funded by this grant will allow land owners to accurately calculate the fair market value of the carbon storage potential of forest land that they own. This information will allow owners of forest property the option of selling or leasing the carbon storage potential to business that seek to offset their environmental impacts, a practice that is becoming more common.

The funding secured by Arcuri for SUNY-ESF is included in the Fiscal Year 2010 Omnibus Appropriations Act, which passed the House of Representatives Thursday by a vote of 221-202 and passed the Senate on Saturday. The bill will now proceed to the President for his final signature.

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